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Reported remarks of Deputy Foreign Minister Semenov and Soviet SALT advisor Kishilov during a luncheon conversation with US SALT advisor Garthoff, 1 May 1972, Helsinki:

Semenov then turned to one substantive matter: limitations on OLPARs. He said that he thought it was now just about resolved, but there was the small matter of determining the level of the MSR. Semenov stated that our Delegation had indicated that the power level of the MSR was 3×10^6 . I interrupted to say that I thought the Delegation had informally indicated that the level of the MSR could be between 2.5 to 3×10^6 , and we were now seeking authority to indicate more officially and precisely the level. Semenov's visage clouded, and he said that there was information "in the press", which indicated that the maximum level of the MSR was somewhat higher than the 3×10^6 which we had indicated. I asked Semenov for a reference, but he declined to provide it. After considerable fencing, he would say no more than that it had appeared in the American press within the last year. I remarked that we could spend the next two or three weeks combing through the American press to see what might have been said about the MSR level but that would not be very fruitful. The main thing was that we knew what the level of the MSR was, and that there needed to be agreement between the two sides.

He said experts could discuss the matter.

This exchange with Semenov was resumed during the luncheon, but without further elucidation of the Soviet view. At one point, when I was pressing Semenov for an indication of the Soviet understanding of the MSR/OLPAR level, Semenov blurted out that he was not authorized to tell us.

Interspersed between encounters with Semenov, Kishilov and I also discussed this issue. After a whispered conference with Semenov, Kishilov finally told me that the figure they were authorized to agree to was 5×10^7 . I objected that this was not the power of the MSR and asked if it represented the

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smallest Soviet ABM radar. Kishilov replied "Oh, no, ours is much larger." Kishilov also repeated that this figure had appeared in the American press, and he thought it had appeared in Secretary Laird's statement in February. I again said this was not the correct figure for the MSR, and that it was much too high. I said I was quite sure there was no such figure in the Laird statement, nor in any other official statement.

Kishilov at one point suggested that if we could not reconcile 5×10^7 with the MSR level, perhaps we should agree on a formula splitting the difference between the smallest US ABM radar and the (larger) smallest Soviet ABM radar--implying that would be another way of arriving at agreement on 5×10^7 as the OLPAR level. I shook my head in the negative.

Semenov, through Kishilov, indicated that he did not want to discuss the OLPAR question further until Ambassador Smith's return--and I had the impression that he was concerned lest the burgeoning discord on the OLPAR issue might be reported back and become a spanner in the works of the machinery producing the anticipated new guidance for the American Delegation.